



SPARK GAP

Vol. 41, Issue 10, October 2024 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities*

On Our MARC:

Please join us for our monthly MARC meeting at 8 am Saturday, October 19th at the JC REMC building in Franklin. Our speaker this month is Ryan Rather, Communications Systems Manager, Indiana Department of Homeland Security. This is also a POTA support your parks weekend, so get out there and activate, or hunt some activators. See you Saturday.

73,
Tim
WC9G

CLUB DUES FOR 2024

It is that time of year for your membership dues for the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club. The annual membership dues is \$25.00 per year and has not changed from last year.

This also a good time to update any of your information for club records such as license upgrade, change of address, contact information or call sign.

This is also a good opportunity for new amateurs to join our club and join in our club activities for 2025.

Please see Jacki Frederick, KI6QOG M.A.R.C. Treasurer.



Birthdays for the month of October:

KB9JMU - Jim Adams

KC9NJM - Bob Jones

KD9FBC - Wilson Low

K0CMD - David Nienhauser

N9KTP - Katie Palmer

KM9S - Darrell Sego

KD9TIP - Jemery Jukes

WB9FIK - Bill Baldwin

W9BZ - Roger Lowary

How ham radio endures - and remains a disaster lifeline - in the iPhone era

When disaster strikes, and conventional communication systems fail, amateur ham radio operators step in to bridge the gap, providing a crucial link between those in affected areas and the outside world.

Written by **Steven Vaughan-Nichols**,
[Senior Contributing Editor](#) Oct. 11, 2024 ZDNet

When I was a kid living near Grantsville, West Virginia, a few neighbors were into amateur ham radio. I found their analog electronics and antennas and their mastery of Morse code fascinating. They were into it because they talked with people thousands of miles away, played with tech, and knew they could help people in an emergency. Decades later, the tech has changed; you no longer need to know Morse code, but people are still out there in all kinds of weather, helping others when there's a disaster.

In the aftermath of a catastrophe, ham radio operators play a vital role in relaying messages between disaster victims and their concerned friends and family members. These skilled volunteers use their equipment to establish communication networks, often when cell towers are down and internet access

is unavailable.

Hams don't just connect individuals -- they also help coordinate large-scale relief efforts. They provide critical information to emergency management officials and help direct resources to where they're needed most.

Although hams are "amateurs" at establishing and maintaining communication links between agencies and networks in disaster-struck areas, they're actually pros.

You see, hams don't just spring into action during emergencies. They undergo regular training and participate in drills to ensure they're prepared for disasters. The biggest drill is the [Amateur Radio Emergency Service \(ARES\) Field Day](#).

In an [age of advanced technology](#), ham radio remains a reliable backup when other systems fail. Armed with their skills and battery-powered radio equipment, operators stand ready to provide a vital service, ensuring that in times of crisis, communication lines remain open and help can reach those who need it. Ham radio operators use a [variety of radio bands](#) to communicate over long distances, allowing them to reach areas far outside the disaster zone. This enables them to relay messages and information when local infrastructure is down.

In a disaster, ham radio operators create self-organized networks to relay messages in and out of affected areas. In the United States, they're regulated by the [Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service \(RACES\)](#).

Many hams also complete Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) [National Incident Management System \(NIMS\)](#) and [Incident Command System \(ICS\)](#) courses to work effectively with emergency management communication frameworks. In addition, some hams take National Weather Service ([SKYWARN](#)) storm spotter training to provide accurate severe weather reports. Finally, there's [Auxiliary Communications \(AUXCOMM\)](#) training to integrate hams into local emergency operations centers.

Armed with their gear and training, hams create "traffic nets" or "nets" to pass information about victims, supplies, and damage reports to authorities and family members outside the disaster zone. These nets have designated frequencies, schedules, and procedures to relay messages and information efficiently. Hams may also be assigned to operate from emergency operations centers, shelters, hospitals, and other critical sites to provide communications.

Operators use standardized message formats and procedures to transmit information accurately. This includes formal message forms, phonetic alphabets, and protocols for relaying messages between stations. Emergency traffic takes priority over routine communications. Hams use a [system of message precedence \(Routine, Priority, Immediate, Flash\)](#) to ensure traffic flows smoothly.

Operators often check into designated nets or report to pre-assigned locations during a natural disaster. No one calls these operators out to get to work. They're expected to report to nets or assigned stations and get on the air.

Many emergency management agencies have formal agreements or memorandum of understanding with amateur radio organizations. This allows for coordinated planning and response.

Want to help the next time a hurricane comes your way? You can start your road to becoming a ham by [studying ham radio concepts](#), terminology, and regulations using resources such as the [ARRL](#)

Technician Class License Manual. You'll then, in the US, need to pass the FCC Amateur Radio License Exam.

You'll also need to purchase a beginner-level transceiver, such as the Baofeng UV-5R, a compact handheld radio scanner transceiver providing four watts in the UHF/VHF frequency ranges. If you get seriously interested in the hobby, you can buy a mountain of equipment from companies like [Ham Radio Outlet](#). You can also often purchase good-quality used gear from hamfests, get-togethers of other radio enthusiasts, and local clubs.

I also highly recommend you connect with a local ham group. They can help you get up to speed faster than any other way. Members can also help you master ham jargon, which can be confusing.

..... *Thanks to Chris, KQ9Y for finding this article.*

An Incredible Amateur Radio Rescue Story

Editor's note: The following story was submitted by Don Gardner, W7PJ, ARRL Idaho Section Emergency Coordinator.

On the evening of September 21, 2024, Greg Owen, WX7Z, heard an amateur radio emergency call on the VHF frequency known as the national simplex calling frequency, 146.52 MHz. Ed Clark, K7ELC, was calling to get medical help for a 51-year-old man who had rolled his four-wheeler.

Mac Mackintosh, W7ENZ, found the accident and injured man near his property where there isn't any cellphone service. Mackintosh had given his handheld radio to Clark to make the call for help while he gave aid to the injured man. The injuries were serious... head trauma, broken collarbone, broken ribs, and difficulty breathing.

Owen called 911 to request help. An ambulance, Life Flight helicopter and law enforcement were dispatched to the location, which was 35 minutes outside Orofino, Idaho. Meanwhile, Owen continued using the amateur radio to relay updates to the dispatcher. The injured man was transported to the hospital via Life Flight and at last report was recovering.

Gardner said hams in Idaho support an old national program called the Wilderness Protocol which encourages the use of the national simplex calling frequency, 146.52 MHz.

"As amateur radio operators, we train to be available to help when help is needed. The more that ham radio operators listen to the radio, the more chance there is that someone will be listening to take your emergency call. This is something that has been used many times throughout this county and here in Idaho," he said. "This is another incredible story to share."

..... *ARRL News October 2024*

Weather Operations

by KC9NJM

Effective October 1st, NOAA NWS simplified the cold weather messaging it will use this fall and winter to more clearly communicate upcoming conditions to emergency managers and the general public. Over the past decade the weather service has been working to streamline its alerts with headlines that are written in more clear language. The revamps come as a result of research that has indicated where the current system of watches, warnings, and advisories, have left audiences confused about the message being conveyed. The most-recent modifications to the cold-weather alerts are an effort to improve clarity and maintain the appropriate emphasis.



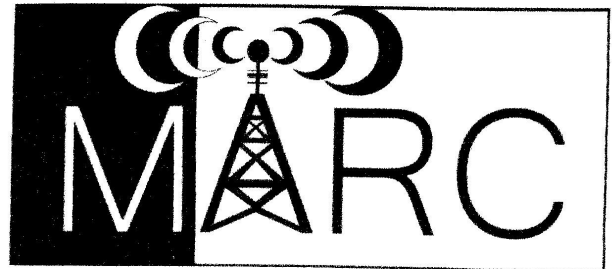
Graphic courtesy of Matt Standridge, WTHR meteorologist, and used with permission.

More information about the NWS revision of its cold weather alerting can be found at:
<https://www.weather.gov/news/243009-cold-hazard-simplification>.

More information about the Hazard Simplification Project can be found at:
<https://www.weather.gov/hazardsimplification>.

Additional source: NOAA NWS

PICTURES FROM M.A.R.C. 2024 PICNIC







MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY 8:00 AM** of each month
at the Johnson County REMC building 750 International Dr. Franklin, IN 46131

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

W9MID Repeater:

Offical SkyWarn Repeater for Johnson County

146.835/
146.235 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

W9MID Repeater:

443.525/
448.525 MHz
(151.4 Hz PL Tone) YEASU SYSTEM FUSION (C4FM)

Club Officers:

President: Tim Aldridge - WC9G
Vice President: Rhonda Curtis - WS9H
Secretary: Jim Adams – KB9JMU
Treasurer: Jacki Frederick - KI6QOG
Repeater Trustee: Chris Frederick – KQ9Y
Club Historian: Art Bleicher – WB9CHR
Club P.I.O. : Rhonda Curtis – WS9H

Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS
146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)

The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club
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Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU

Please send your articles to my email: n9siu@yahoo.com no later than the 3rd week of the month.



Thanks to Johnson Co. REMC for the use of their building for meetings and testing.